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September 9, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Council Staff

SUBJECT: Anadromous Habitat and Hatchery review update

BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Patty O'Toole, Mark Fritsch and Leslie Bach

Summary: Update on the Anadromous Habitat and Hatchery category review and the letters received from the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission and Yakama Nation with their perspectives and concerns regarding the timing of the Anadromous Habitat and Hatchery review.

Relevance: Section 4h(10)(D) of the Northwest Power Act directs the Council to review projects proposed for funding by Bonneville to implement the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. The Council engages in this review process with the assistance of the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP). The Council and Bonneville work together to develop the information necessary to make the review process successful.

Workplan: Fish and Wildlife Division preliminary work plan 2020; Program Implementation (2014 Program and 2020 addendum); Project review.

Background: The Anadromous Habitat and Hatchery review is the last category of this review cycle. Staff anticipates that there will be approximately 135 projects in this review. These projects include hatchery operation and maintenance (O&M), fish screen O&M, habitat implementation and the monitoring and evaluation activities associated with these project types.

The review is scheduled to be initiated with the managers the first week of November 2020. Council and Bonneville staffs are working together to confirm the list of projects in this category and to update the proposal form and submission process. A typical review process will take nine to ten months to complete once it begins.

On July 31, 2020 the Council received a letter from Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC), with the support of their member tribes, requesting that the Council reconsider the timing of the Anadromous Habitat and Hatchery review. The letter describes the impact that the COVID-19 situation is having on the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, and the Nez Perce Tribe. Each of the tribes have experienced closure of their government offices including their tribal fisheries programs. The letter notes that most tribal fisheries staff have not been allowed to return to work and some are unable to work remotely. The Council also received a letter from the Yakama Nation on September 4th that requested that we reschedule the review to a later date.

The Resident Fish and Sturgeon project review process was also impacted by Covid-19. Most project sponsors were able to complete their portions of the review with additional time for sponsor responses to the ISRP preliminary comments. Two sponsor entities have not been able to complete the review and we will welcome their responses when they are able to respond. In the meantime, the remainder of the Resident Fish and Sturgeon review is expected to be completed in October.

Though most of the project sponsors and Council and Bonneville staffs were able to proceed and complete the review associated with the Resident Fish and Sturgeon category, it is difficult to know what the COVID-19 situation will be this fall. The staff would like to discuss with the Committee the option of rescheduling the Anadromous Habitat and Hatchery Review to begin in February of 2021. We also suggest adding additional time to several steps of the review process to assist the project sponsors and the Independent Scientific Review Panel. This is the largest group of projects (approximately 135) in the current review cycle. An extended timeline would also allow Council and Bonneville staffs to further refine the proposal form template to capture key aspects related to this specific set of projects.

Following is a preliminary review schedule that reflects a rescheduled start date and the allowance of additional time in key steps to address the issues raised above. You will note that the overall time frame is increased from nine months to 14 months.

Possible Review Schedule Summary

Anadromous Habitat and Hatchery Review Steps	Date
Review Start Date	February 2, 2021
Review Materials Due	May 3, 2021
Presentations	Sequenced over several weeks in June and July 2021
ISRP Preliminary Report	September 23, 2021
Public Comment begins	September 24, 2021
Responses Due	November 22, 2021
Final Report	February 10, 2022
ISRP Presentation to Council	February 2022
Public Comment ends	February 21, 2022
Committee Recommendations	March 2022
Council Recommendations	April 2022